Prince William

FOREST PARK
VIRGINIA

Prince William Forest Park is a quiet, unhurried place for observing nature, for camping and watching deer at twilight, for picnicking, fishing and bike-riding—a place to find tumbling waters and shaded trails to remote hillsides, to strengthen little-used leg muscles, and to relax away from the city.

On the surface, this forest community of wild plants and slender Virginia pine trees shows little evidence of its recent past. But, a closer look reveals a remarkable story. It tells how the land became barren from over-use and how nature reclaimed the stripped and depleted fields abandoned by man. Take your time and discover this story of man and the land while enjoying the recreational facilities.

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E'RE JOINING THE METRIC WORLD

he National Park Service is introducing metric easurements in its publications to help Ameri-ns become acquainted with the metric system nd to make interpretation more meaningful for ark visitors from other nations.

DMINISTRATION

rince William Forest Park is administered by the ational Park Service, U.S. Department of the terior. For additional information, write to rince William Forest Park, Box 208, Triangle, VA 2172. Telephone (703) 221-7181.

s the Nation's principal conservation agency, the epartment of the Interior has basic responsibili-es to protect and conserve our land and water, nergy and minerals, fish and wildlife, park and ecreation areas, and for the wise use of all those esources. The Department also has a major re-ponsibility for American Indian reservation ommunities and for people who live in Island erritories under U.S. administration.

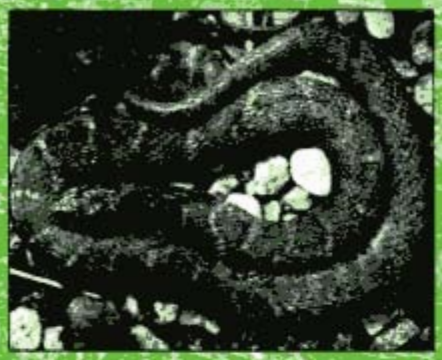
lational Park Service
.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

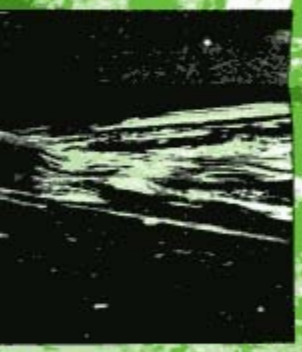
The delicate flowers of the azalea are among the showiest of the park's wild shrubs.

Christmas fern remains green for the holidays and throughout the winter.

A FOREST RETURNS

Beginning with the arrival of the area's tlers in the late 17th century, forests wer the land was plowed. Lumber and fur, tob grain—products of virgin forests and fe —were carried to distant countries from thriving port of Dumfries at the mouth tico Creek. In this era of plenty, few con practices were observed, and the soil its fertility. Light and erodible, it was was by rains and carried downstream wher up the Dumfries harbor. Thus, abuse of caused the port and the local area to decl of the farming had stopped by the sta 20th century. Soon the unproductive s to revert to forest, and the area compr park became a patchwork of abandon and of woodlands in various stages o succession. These have since gradua way to a beautiful forest where man c goes as a visitor.





A beaver pond is a perfect place for a patient observer to catch glimpses of the park's year-round residents. The box turtle, a land reptile, may be seen as it feeds upon berries, insects, earthworms, and mushrooms. Don't mistake the semi-aquatic northern water snake for the poisonous water moccasin, which doesn't live this far north. With luck you may see beavers at work creating new wildlife habitats by building dams that flood stream valleys.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

A long history of exploitation with little regard for conservation makes Prince William Forest Park especially suited for learning about the delicate balance in our natural environment. The consequences of drastic human demands upon the soil can still be seen here as a new forest takes time to mature.

The visitor who wants to piece together this story of change will find additional printed information at park headquarters and the Turkey Run Ridge Nature Center. Here park rangers maintain self-guiding nature trails and exhibits. They also conduct trips and give illustrated talks on natural history. The center is open daily during summer; weekends during winter.

An Environmental Study Area (ESA) on a long-abandoned farm site in the park is reserved for field trips by school classes and organized groups. Teaching materials adapted to the ESA can be obtained in advance by calling (703) 221-2104.

HELP PROTECT THIS PARK AND YOURSELF

Man's present intrusion on this landscape is far less upsetting than it once was. You can help protect the park further by remembering to leave plants and animals undisturbed. You, and those who come after you, will enjoy the park more if everyone leaves camping and picnic areas the way they would like to find them. Please observe these regulations and tips for a safe, comfortable stay. Remember, safety is no accident.

Accidents must be reported as soon as possible to a park ranger or to park headquarters.

Motor vehicles should not be driven or parked on grassy areas or road shoulders. Please observe posted speed limits.

Fires are permitted only at established picnic areas and campgrounds, and then only in fireplaces provided. Extinguish fires completely before leaving, even for a temporary absence.

Hunting is prohibited. Firearms, fireworks, knives with blades more than 7.6 centimeters (3 inches) long, archery equipment, and slingshots are not allowed in the park unless adequately cased, broken down, or otherwise packed to prevent their use.

Natural features are strictly protected. The destruction, injury, defacement, removal, or disturbance of any natural feature, such as trees, wildflowers, rocks, or wildlife, is prohibited.

Pets must be kept on a leash at all times.

Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

Lost and found items are to b[illegible] to or turned in at park headquarters.

Climbing trees and park str[illegible]dered dangerous and is not pe[illegible]

Swimming in the park's [illegible]ers is prohibited.

URNS

the arrival of the area's first set- 7th century, forests were cut and wed. Lumber and fur, tobacco and of virgin forests and fertile soils o distant countries from the then Dumfries at the mouth of Quan- is era of plenty, few conservation observed, and the soil soon lost and erodible, it was washed away rried downstream where it silted harbor. Thus, abuse of the land and the local area to decline. Most had stopped by the start of the oon the unproductive soil began est, and the area comprising the patchwork of abandoned farms ds in various stages of natural se have since gradually given ful forest where man comes and

The park, named for the Virginia county in which it lies, now harbors 89 known species of trees and shrubs. It includes pure stands of Virginia pine, a large variety of hardwoods, and a green understory of mountain laurel, holly, dogwood, redbud, and other shrubs and small trees. Among the resident animals are white-tailed deer, red and gray foxes, beaver, raccoon, opossum, flying squirrel, gray squirrel, skunk, and woodchuck; wild turkey, ruffed grouse, red-tailed hawk, and numerous species of songbirds; several kinds of amphibians and warm-water fish; and numerous reptiles, including the copperhead snake.

Erosion by the North and South Branches of Quantico Creek has removed the Coastal Plain sand, gravel, and clay, and exposed the ancient granite, schist, and quartzite of the Piedmont. Before 1920, pyrite, containing iron and sulfur, was mined near the confluence of the two creek branches.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Hiking. Approximately 56 kilometers (35 miles) of trails and fire roads wind through the park. Parking areas along the park roads provide convenient starting points for many hikes. Each major trail is color blazed and marked at intervals with a number; those numbers appear on the map. Several self-guiding nature trails can be found in different parts of the park. Trails are well maintained, but hikers should be alert for such obstructions as fallen limbs. Please do not hike access trails into cabin camps; admittance is by permit only.

Biking. Bicycle riding is permitted on all roads and fire roads in the park. Motorists and bicyclists have equal rights and equal responsibilities for safety. Remember steep hills can be dangerous.

Fishing. Trout, bass, bluegill, perch, and catfish are found here. Virginia fishing regulations and special park regulations apply; a State license is required. Carter's Pond and Cabin Camp #3 are closed to fishing. Fishing information is available at park headquarters and at the nature center.

Picnicking. Pine Grove and Telegraph Road Picnic Grounds, near the main entrance, are open all year. Each area has tables, fireplaces, trash containers, water, comfort stations, and playfields. Pine Grove has a shelter for use on a first-come, first-served basis. Carter's Day Camp is for use by groups on a reservation basis.

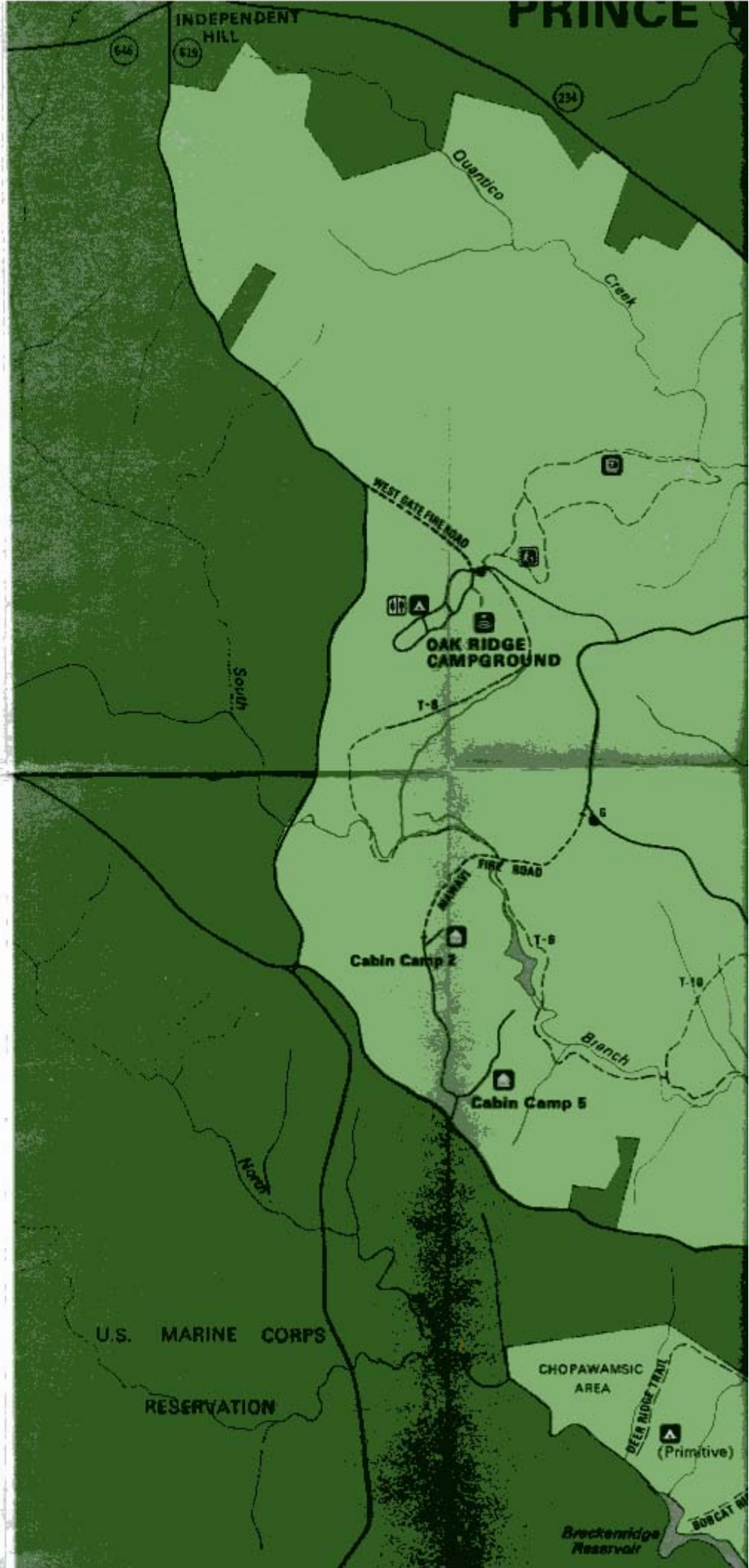
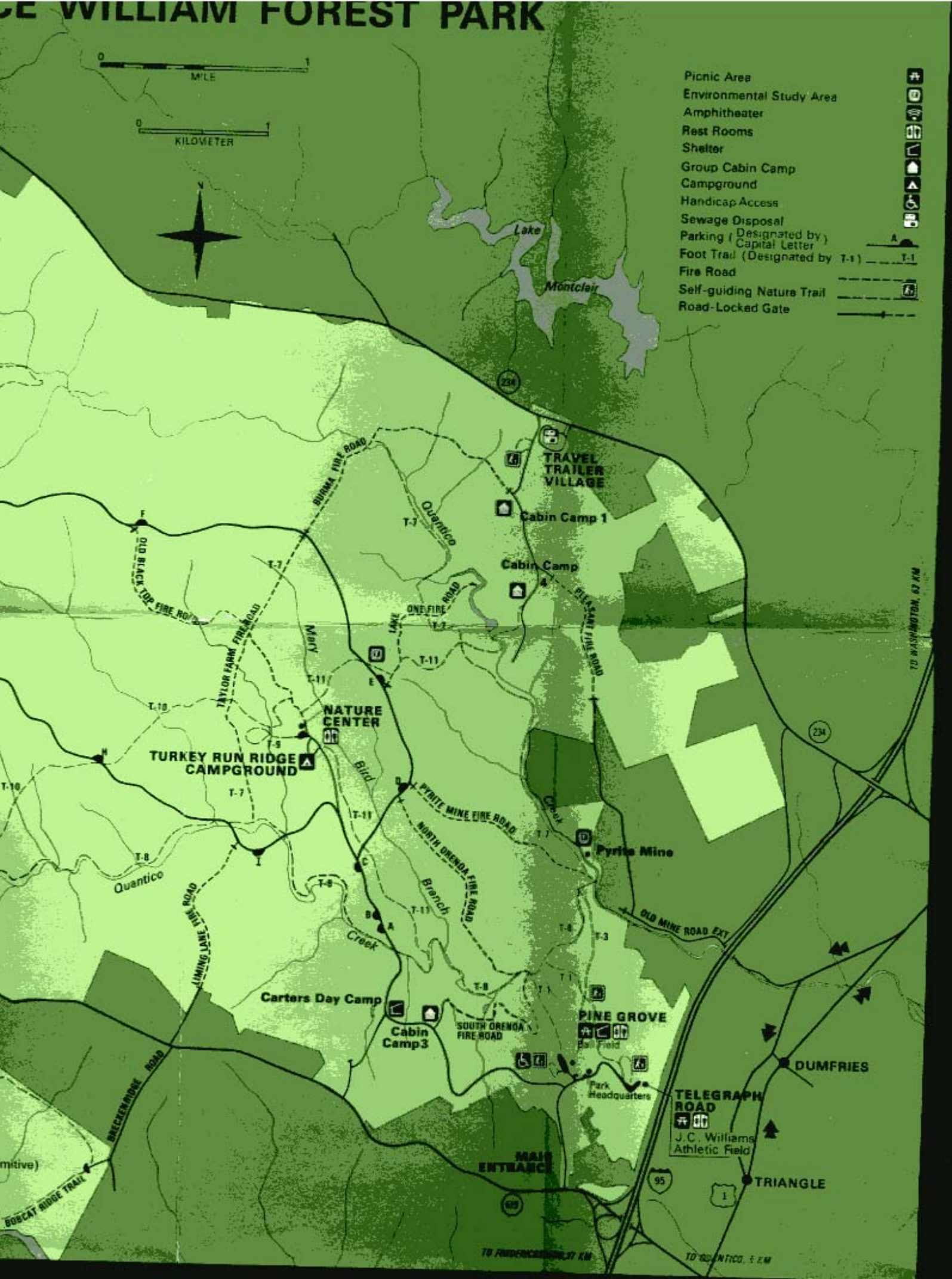
Tent camping for family use. Oak Ridge Campground, for use on a first-come, first-served basis, has 113 campsites with a paved parking slip for each one. Also provided are water, comfort stations, tables, fireplaces, and trash containers.

Trailer camping. Travel Trailer Village, operated by a park concessioner, has sites divided into three types of service—hookups, for electricity, water, and sewage; hookups for electricity and water; and hookups for electricity only. Showers and coin-operated laundry facilities are also provided. Call (703) 221-2474 for information.

Primitive camping. Chopawamsic is the park's backpack camping area. Campsites are from 0.8 to 2.4 kilometers (0.5 to 1.5 miles) from the trailhead. The only facilities are pit toilets and fireplaces. The camper must carry everything, including drinking water, in. Please carry out all your trash and dump it in containers at the parking lot. Use-permits must be obtained at park headquarters. Call or write the park for an application; telephone reservations are not accepted. You may get litter bags at park headquarters.

Cabin camping for groups. Organized groups of 50 or more people may reserve one of five cabin camps for overnight camping. Reservations for the spring season (April-May) are due by mid-February; for the fall season (Sept.-Oct.) by mid-June. Each camp has sleeping cabins, a central kitchen-dining hall, restroom and shower facilities, staff quarters, a nature lodge, and an administration building. Groups must provide their own bedding and cooking utensils. Call or write the park for further information.

Tent camping for groups. Turkey Run Ridge Campground is available to organized groups by reservation only. Call or write the park for an application.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